

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 22, 2010

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

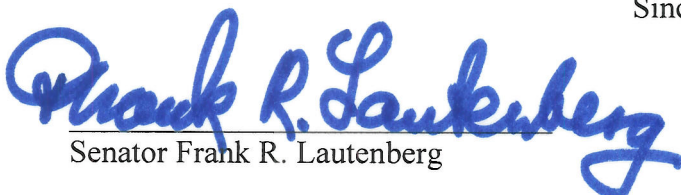
We thank you for your January 18<sup>th</sup> decision to extend humanitarian parole to certain Haitian orphans. This was an important step toward ensuring the safety of children who have begun the process of being adopted by U.S. families. We are writing today to urge you to consider expanding this new policy to include orphans without family in Haiti, allowing them to live temporarily with close family members located in the U.S.

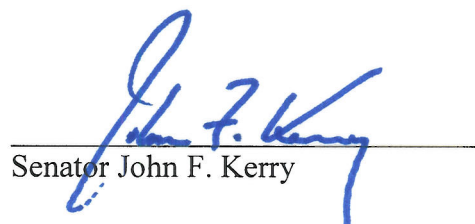
It is estimated that Haiti was home to more than 350,000 orphans before the devastating January 12<sup>th</sup> earthquake. Many more children have lost their parents as a result of this catastrophic disaster. Yet only 600-700 orphans may be affected by the new humanitarian parole policy announced on January 18<sup>th</sup>. The orphans who remain in Haiti are in dire need of supplies, safe shelter and assistance, which have been slow to reach them. We need to continue to evaluate every possible option to help as many of these children as possible receive the care they need.

We recognize that the Department of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Department of State, is continuing to evaluate whether additional groups of Haitian orphans may be eligible for humanitarian parole. As you continue this process, we urge you to consider expanding the humanitarian parole policy to orphans in Haiti that have close family members in the U.S. that are willing to provide a temporary or permanent location for them. This status should only be granted upon the permission of the Haitian government to orphans that cannot be reunited with family in Haiti. It is also imperative that close family members are also properly vetted by the U.S. government.

We understand that there are a number of challenges involved with expanding humanitarian parole to this group of orphans, including locating government files concerning them and, most importantly, ensuring they are placed in safe homes with close family members. However, given the vulnerability of this group and the family members who eagerly await them, we respectfully urge you to make this group of orphans a high priority when evaluating other Haitian population groups that may receive humanitarian parole.

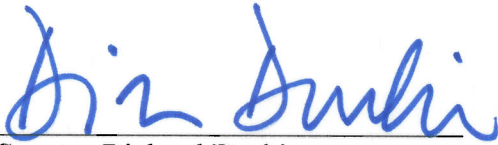
Sincerely,

  
Senator Frank R. Lautenberg

  
Senator John F. Kerry



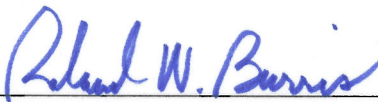
Senator Benjamin L. Cardin



Senator Richard Durbin



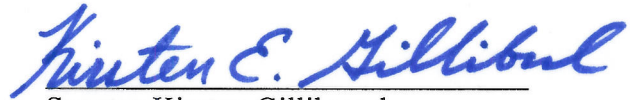
Senator Robert Menendez



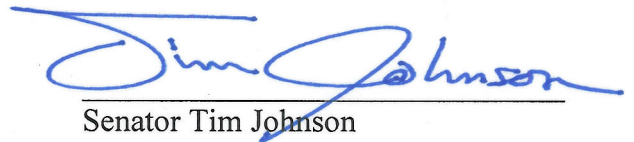
Senator Roland W. Burris



Senator Mary Landrieu



Senator Kirsten Gillibrand



Senator Tim Johnson



Senator Debbie Stabenow